

*** * REASONS FOR AMENDMENTS AND REMARKS * ***

Applicants wish to acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's analysis and efforts in examining this application.

On page 2 of the Official Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Jackson (U.S. Patent No. 5,301,533). The Examiner alleges that Jackson shows an embodiment in Figures 11-17 comprising actuator 202, first 270 and second 276 jaw members, and cam slots 284, 296 each having a straight locking portion 294, 302 and a curved pivoting portion 288, 298. The Examiner asserted that the jaws pivotally move as cam pin 252 travels through a pivoting portion 288, 298, and the jaws remain closed as pin 252 enters locking portions 294, 302.

Claim 1 has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claim 1, as amended, recites that the cam pin is movable in first and second directions, and that the locking portions selectively prevent the cam pin from moving in the first and second directions when engaged by the cam pin. The jaw members are held in position when the cam pin is prevented from moving in the first and second directions by the locking portions. Support for these amendments can be found in Figures 6 and 7, for example.

The manner in which the cam pin moves and interacts with the locking portions is not disclosed by Jackson. During an Interview with the Examiner on July 5, 2005 where these rejected claims were discussed, he alleged that the end portions 294, 302 of Jackson are "locking portions" due to the jaw members 270, 276 remaining closed at the end of the stroke when pin 252 reaches the end of the slot within end portions 294, 302. In other words, the end of the slot which defines the end of the stroke when the pin moves in the first direction makes 294, 302 "locking portions." Jackson, however, does not show an embodiment having locking portions that prevent a cam pin from moving in a first and a second direction within a cam slot. The jaw members 270, 276 of Jackson only remain closed during operation due to the location of pin 252 in end portions 294, 302 during the stroke. Loss of fluid pressure should allow jaw members 270, 276 to be forced open causing pin 252 to travel back along end portions 294, 302 towards the other slot portions. The embodiment of the invention in Claim 1 recites that the cam pin is

prevented from moving in the first and second directions when located in the locking portions, which Jackson does not show. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. In addition, Claims 2-4 and 6, which are dependent upon Claim 1, should be allowable as well.

On pages 2 and 3 of the Official Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 7, 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated over Forster et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,886,635). The Examiner alleges that the patent to Forster et al. shows two pivotable jaws 5, 6 each comprising through slots 5a, 6a having angled "locking segments" at each closed end thereof. These angled locking segments, in cooperation with pins 14, 15, sleeve 13, support 16, springs 23, flange 17, and rods 21, function to hold the jaw members in either an open or closed position until driven by the piston actuator.

Claim 7 has been amended to include limitations reciting the manner in which the pin moves and interacts with the locking segment. The amendments include a pin extending into through-slots and movable in first and second directions with each through-slot having first and second locking segments, with the first locking segments selectively preventing the pin from moving in a first and a second direction within the through-slots to hold the jaw members in a closed position. Support for these amendments can be found in Figures 2 and 4, for example.

Forster et al. fails to disclose such a locking portion that selectively prevents a pin from moving in a first and a second direction when located therein. During the July 5, 2005 Interview where Claim 7 was also discussed, the Examiner alleged that guide grooves 5a, 6a each include "locking segments" due to the catches 5a, 6a being closed or open at each end of the stroke when pins 14, 15 have reached a respective end thereof. There is no teaching in Forster et al. to suggest that grooves 5a, 6a prevent the pins 14, 15 from moving in both a first and a second direction. The locking segment of each through-slot in Claim 7 selectively prevents the pin located therein from moving in the first and second directions. Withdrawal of the rejection is, thus, respectfully requested. In addition, Claims 10 and 11, which are dependent upon Claim 7, should be allowable as well.

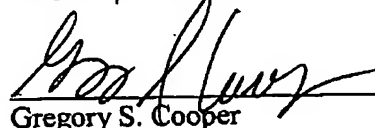
Claims 12-18 have been added. It is respectfully believed that the prior art does not teach or suggest all of the limitations recited therein. For example, Claim 12 recites a gripper

assembly including a cam pin movable in a first and a second direction within each cam slot. The cam pin moves in the first direction when traveling from a pivoting portion to a locking portion within each cam slot. The locking portion selectively prevents movement of the cam pin in the second direction when the cam pin is located in the locking portion. The prior art does not show such a cam slot having a locking portion that prevents a cam pin from moving in the second direction as claimed. The Applicants respectfully believe that Claims 12-18 are in condition for allowance in view of the prior art.

If, upon consideration of the above, the Examiner should feel that there remain outstanding issues in the present application that could be resolved, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' patent counsel at the telephone number given below to discuss such issues.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 is hereby made. To the extent additional fees are required, please charge the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 02-1010 (614359/82664) and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,


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